HINATA NO OOKAMI

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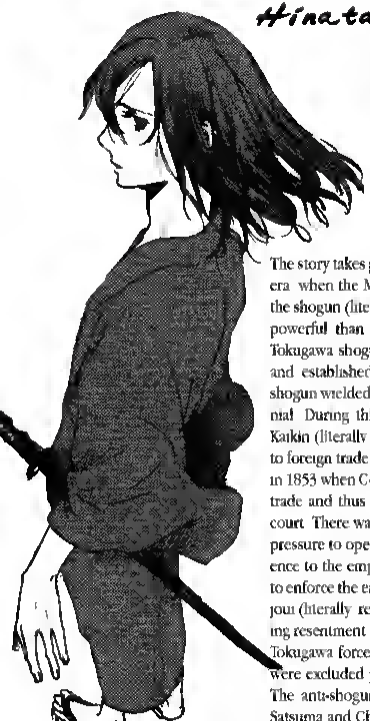


Hinata no Ookami Terms

-shi: A formal honorific used when the speaker is not familiar with the person addressed

Rounin: A samurai without a master. A group of rounin is a rouningumi

Roushigumi: A rouningumi formed by the shogunate to protect the shogun

Miburou (Miburoushigumi): Depending on the kanji spelling, a Mibu rounin, or the nickname "wolves of Mibu"

Historical Setting

The story takes place in 1863, in the Bakumatsu (literally "end of the shogunate") era, when the Meiji Restoration took place. During the reign of the shogunate, the shogun (literally "general") held all the military power of Japan and was more powerful than the emperor, who was a religious and political leader. The Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1867) began when Tokugawa Ieyasu seized power and established a government at Edo (modern day Tokyo). The Tokugawa shogun wielded political power, and the role of the emperor was mostly ceremonial. During this period, the policy of Sakoku (literally "locked country") or Kaikin (literally "sea restriction") was enacted, which saw Japan closing its doors to foreign trade since it was seen as a threat to the shogunate. Sakoku was lifted in 1853 when Commodore Matthew Perry forced the opening of Japan to foreign trade and thus allowed foreigners into Japan, despite the will of the imperial court. There was increasing sentiment that the shogunate, which yielded under pressure to open Japan to foreign trade and was deemed unable to show reverence to the emperor, should be replaced by a government that was more able to enforce the emperor's will. This was manifested in the political slogan sonnou joui (literally "revere the emperor, expel the barbarians"). There was also increasing resentment from the tozama daimyo (literally "outside lords") who lost to the Tokugawa forces during the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate as they were excluded permanently from all powerful positions within the shogunate. The anti-shogunate sonnou joui intellectuals and daimyos, particularly from Satsuma and Choshu, joined forces and formed the pro-imperialist Ishin Shishi which battled against the shogunate forces, which included the Shinsengumi. In the end, the Tokugawa shogunate fell in 1867, and this signalled the return of power to the emperor, which was known as the Meiji Restoration. However, in reality, political power shifted to the leader of the Meiji Restoration (the imperialists) who governed the country in the name of the emperor.

Chapter 2

THIRD YEAR OF THE BUNKYUU ERA (1863)
FEBRUARY 9TH
NAKASENDO ROAD, HONJOU INN
WATER! BRING WATER!
IT'LL TURN INTO A BLAZE!

CHAPTER 2

Chatter
Chatter
Chatter
WHAT HAPPENED!?
IT LOOKS LIKE THAT SAMURAI HAS NOWHERE TO STAY TONIGHT
THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE CAN LIGHT A FIRE IN THE MIDDLE OF A REST HOUSE—
Mutter
Mutter
THEY SHOULD EXTINGUISH THAT FIRE SOMEHOW.
THE ENTIRE INN TOWN'S TROUBLED BY IT—
IS IT ALWAYS SO CHAOTIC IN PLACES WHERE THE RONIN GATHER?
HE'S EVEN USING THE DOORS OF OUR STORE-ROOMS AS FIREWOOD
IS HE THE ONE RESPON-SIBLE FOR THIS?
NO...

HE'S THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR RESERVING THE ROOMS.
KONDOU-SHI, LIFT YOUR HEAD.
...

THERE'S NO POINT IN YOU KNEELING THERE LIKE THAT.
MITO ROUNIN
SORIZAWA KAMO
KONDOU ISAMI OF BUSHUU
IT WAS DUE TO MY CARELESS-NESS...
SFX: STOMP, STOMP, STOMP
SIR! SIR!
CLACK
YES?

I NOTICED THAT THE FIRE'S GOTTEN REALLY BIG!
REALLY? WHAT'S THE SITUATION LIKE NOW? IS OUR SENSEI HERE?
I SAW HIM
HE'S ON HIS KNEES APOLOGIZING TO A HAUGHTY-LOOKING RONIN...
SENSEI?
HE'S THE SENSEI OF OUR DOJO, THE ONE WHO RESERVED THE ROOMS...
AH!
ON HIS KNEES!?
YE... YES

HIJIKATA TOSHIZOU OF BUSHUU
SO WHAT IF KONDOU-SAN KNELT?
DON'T HARASS THE YOUNG LADY.

EVEN SO, HE SHOULDN'T HAVE KNELT. THAT'S TOO MUCH.
HEY, IS IT OK IF I GO TAKE A LOOK?

HIJI-KATA-SAN...
IT CAN'T BE HELPED. HE DIDN'T PREPARE SERIZAWA'S ROOM.

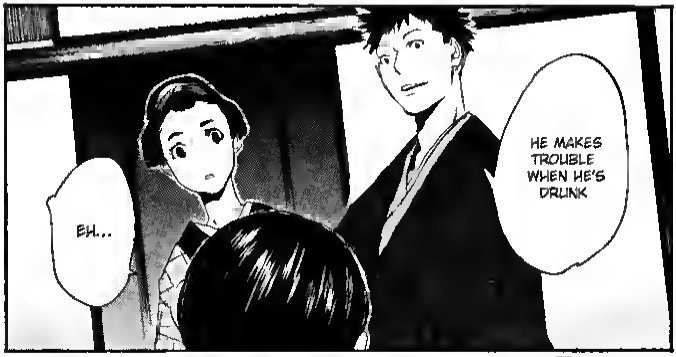
WE'RE NOT GOING TO MEDDLE QUIT IT
SENDAI ROUNIN
YAMANAMI KEISUKE
.YES,
BUT US GOING WOULDN'T HELP ANY.
OUSHUU ROUNIN
OKITA SOUJI
BUT YAMANAMI-SAN, OUR SENSEI'S IN TROUBLE RIGHT NOW.
IYO ROUNIN
HARADA SANOSUKE
BUT PATTAN AND HEISUKE HAVE ALREADY GONE, RIGHT?

HARADA-KUN, CAN YOU SEE FROM OVER THERE?
GUNAI ROUNIN
TOUDOU HEISUKE
SEE ANY-THING?
NO NOTHING
MATSUMAE ROUNIN
NAGAKURA SHINPACHI
THOSE TWO LOVE A FIRE AND A GOOD FIGHT
WHERE, WHERE?
THIS IS GOING TO BE HARD. THIS REST HOUSE ONLY HAS ONE WIDE CORRIDOR LEADING IN THERE.
...
REALLY.

ARE YOU ALL ROUNIN?
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.
SIRS, YOU'RE ALL FROM THE ROUNINGUMI, RIGHT?
THE ANGLE'S BAD. I ONLY KNOW THAT IT'S REALLY BRIGHT.
HEY, I'M A COMMON CITIZEN.
TO BE HONEST, SOME OF US ARE GAMBLERS WE ALL HAVE RATHER WEIRD ORIGINS
HEH.
I'M UPPER-MIDDLE CLASS.
...
I WASN'T REFERRING TO YOU, HIJIKATA-KUN.

THERE REALLY ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE HERE. WHERE ARE YOU ALL HEADING TOO?
KYOTO.
THE SHOGUN IS GOING TO KYOTO WE'RE HERE TO PROTECT HIM.
HEH? THEN YOU'RE ACTUALLY ...
HAHA HA
NO MISTAKES HERE. SOME OF US ARE DISTINGUISHED GUYS.
WE'RE JUST ANSWERING THE SHOGUNATE'S REQUEST
YES ...
IS THE PERSON WHO LIT THE FIRE SOMEONE VERY IMPORTANT?
HIS VOICE AND BODY ARE BOTH REALLY BIG...
SERIZAWA-SAN?

HE'S A DIVISION LEADER IN THE ROUNIN-GUMI
BUT HE'S NOT A GOVERNMENT OFFICER. HE'S ALSO A ROUNIN.
...WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME? I HAVE NO IDEA.
WHAT IS HE REALLY LIKE..?
IS HE IMPORTANT, HIJIKATA-SAN?
SERIZAWA KAMO..
FROM MITO, A MASTER OF THE SHINTOU MUNEN SWORD STYLE.
AMONG THE GOVERNMENT OFFICERS WHO LEAD THE ROUNINGUMI, HE'S GOT QUITE AN IMPORTANT PRESENCE...


HE MAKES TROUBLE WHEN HE'S DRUNK
EH...

CAN'T THE GOVERNMENT OFFICERS DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT SERIZAWA GUY?
IF THEY COULD, WE WOULDN'T BE HAVING ALL THIS TROUBLE NOW.

IT'S REALLY WORRY-ING
DISCIPLINE OFFICER
YAMAOKA TETSU
ASSISTANT DISCIPLINE OFFICER
KIYOKAWA HACHIRŌU

SHOULD WE USE FORCE?
IT'S GOING TO BE A PROBLEM IF SOMEONE DIES BEFORE WE EVEN GET TO KYOTO
YAMAOKA-SAN THAT'S YOUR JOB
KIYOKAWA-SAN, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING TO STOP SERIZAWA-SAN?
GOVERNMENT OFFICER
SASAKI TADAKIBUROU
I WISH THERE WERE SOME PEACEFUL WAY TO SETTLE THIS...
SASAKI-DONO
DON'T YOU REMEMBER? HE'S KONDOU ISAMI, THE ONE WHO ALLOCATED THE ROOMS. HE'S THE OWNER OF SHIEIKAN, A KENJUTSU DOJO IN EDO
WHO'S THE GUY KNEELING BEFORE SERIZAWA?

WHERE ARE THE OTHER PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR RESERVING THE ROOMS?
I THINK THEY WENT OFF TO FIND SUITABLE REPLACEMENT ROOMS.
OF ALL THE ROOMS, THEY FORGET TO RESERVE SERIZAWA'S.
WE'D BETTER GET RID OF SERIZAWA-SAN'S FOUL MOOD.
...I'M GOING TO THE TOILET.

AH.
I'M GOING TOO.
NO, I'M NOT GOING WITH YOU.
I HATE GETTING UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO GO TO THE TOILET.
KID.
HIJIKATA-SAN, YOU'RE GOING TO CHECK OUT THE FIRE.
...
OF COURSE.

DON'T PEE IN YOUR TROUSERS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT FROM PLAYING WITH FIRE
Hahaha. YOU TOO
YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT KONDOU-SENSEI
NAGAKURA-SAN TOUDOU-SAN
HOW IS IT? HAS KONDOU-SAN BEEN BADLY TREATED?
ABOUT THAT..

IT SEEMS THAT HE'S BEING FORCED TO DRINK.
THAT'S GREAT.
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE ALL ALCOHOLICS.
I'M SO JEALOUS.
KONDOU-SAN CAN'T DRINK.

IF WE DON'T STOP HIM...
AH, I DON'T THINK THAT'S POSSIBLE.
bump
UWA AAH!
HOLD ON!
WHAT IS IT?
ARE YOU IN THE SAME LEAGUE AS KONDOU-SHI?
...
clasp

DON'T GO AND RILE UP SERIZAWA NOW.
CAN'T YOU WAIT FOR A BIT?
...
KONDOU-SAN IS MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND
I CAN'T STAND BY DOING NOTHING.
UH...
Roar!! Alligator
THE OTHER PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR RESERVING THE ROOMS ARE PREPARING SERIZAWA'S RIGHT NOW.
THAT SHOULD COOL HIS ANGER.
...SIR, YOU HAVE SWORD CALLUSES.
THAT'S BECAUSE I'M A DISCIPLE OF THE SHIEIKAN SCHOOL.
DON'T THINK ABOUT KILLING HIM.
DO YOU THINK WE OF THE SHINDOU MUNEN STYLE ARE INCAPABLE OF KILLING HIM?

TIN: THE SHIEIKAN SCHOOL TEACHES THE TENNENRISHIN STYLE.

YOU'RE CONSIDERING KILLING HIM?
WHO KNOWS?
IT DEPENDS ON HIS NEXT MOVE.
...
KONDOU-SAN!
!
TOSHI-SAN.

YOU'RE THINKING OF FORCING IT DOWN EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN'T DRINK?
WHO ARE YOU?
SHIEIKAN, HIJIKATA TOSHIZOU.

SFX: RISE

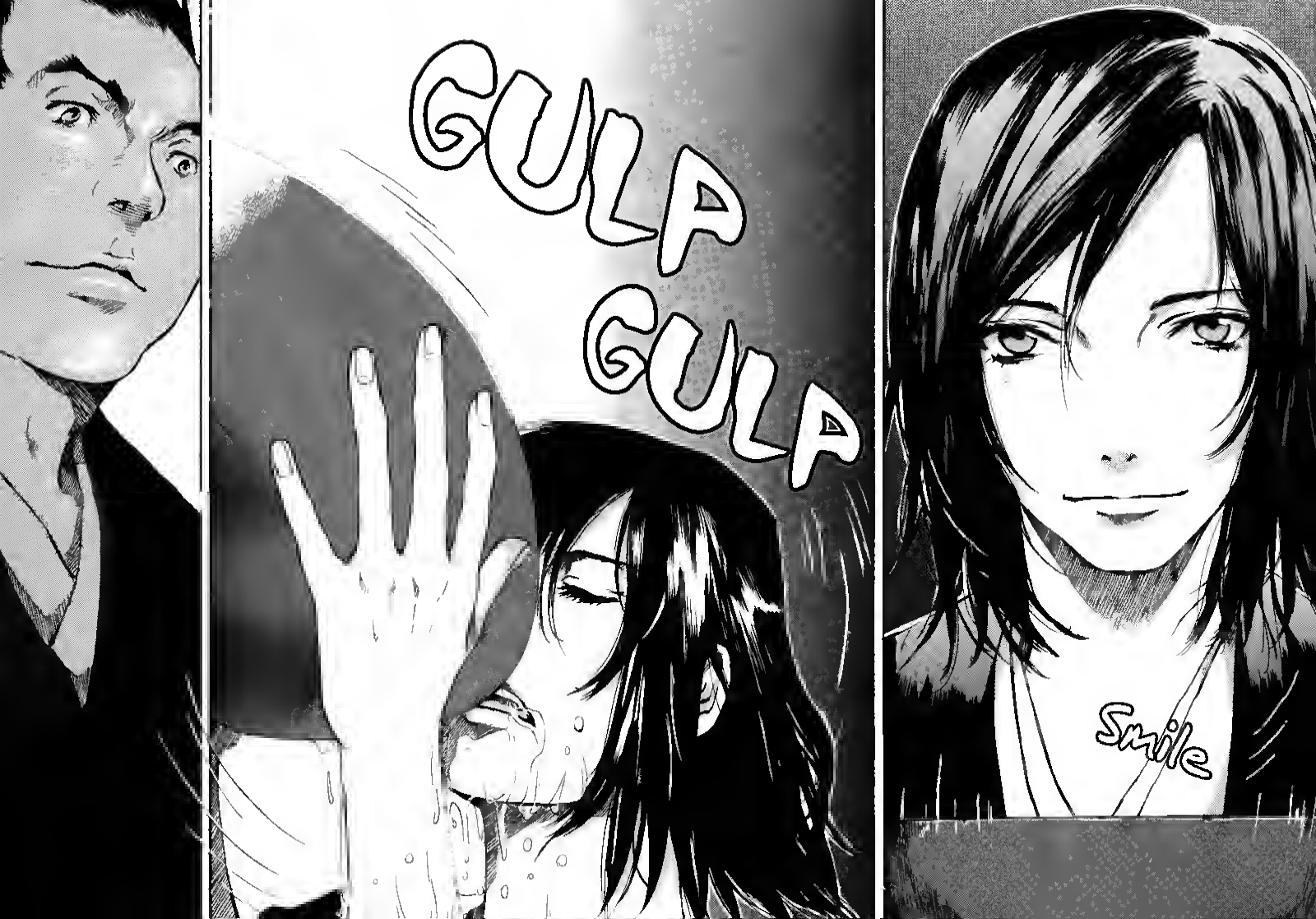
ARE YOU A MAN? I ACTUALLY THOUGHT YOU WERE A WOMAN
SERIZAWA-SAN, THIS MAN CAN'T DRINK.

CAN'T YOU LET HIM GO?
WHAT IF I SAID... NO?

ALL RIGHT, HIJIKATA-KUN. YOU DRINK IN HIS STEAD, THEN
HE'S GIGANTIC!

tap
tap
SEEMS THAT MY ROOM'S ALREADY PREPARED.
IF YOU DRINK THIS, I'LL MOVE INTO IT.
...
A TEA... BASIN?
WHAT? WHY IS HIJIKATA-SAN THE ONE WHO'S DRINKING NOW?
shock
EEH

HIJIKATA-SAN SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DRINK EITHER...
THIS IS MY DUTY.
TOSHI-SAN, NO.
ALL RIGHT, HOW ABOUT IT?
...


GULP
GULP
Smile

SLIDE
Thump
TOSHI-SAN!
AA...

SORRY FOR GIVING YOU ALL THIS TROUBLE, KONDOU-SHI
SERI-ZAWA-SENSEI
WHAT A PAIN THIS ONE CAN'T DRINK EITHER
GET SOME WATER INTO HIM QUICKLY STRETCH HIM OUT AND LET HIM GET SOME REST
I'LL BE HEADING BACK TO MY OWN ROOM.
BYE
WHAT? SO IT'S OVER LIKE THAT?

THAT SERIZAWA'S QUITE A CHARACTER.
NO, I ONLY SEE A TROUBLE-MAKER.
HIJIKATA-SAN'S ALSO INTERESTING.
HE ACTED AS IF HE COULD CARE LESS IN THE ROOM, BUT HE WOULD ACTUALLY GO THIS FAR.
HE'S A STUBBORN GUY.
IN THE NEXT CHAPTER, WE'LL CONTINUE WITH HIJIKATA WAKING UP TO A MAJOR MIGRAINE AND HEAVY RETCHING, AND HIGHLY REGRETTING HIS PREVIOUS NIGHT'S ACTIVITIES AS A RESULT.